

# The Knowledge of God

Dan Todd | April 23, 2018

If there is a theme which identifies my ministry more than any other it is the knowledge and the character and the sovereignty of God. I am convinced that, if we are wrong in our understanding of the theology of God, then all of our other doctrines are equally as wrong. The knowledge of God is fundamental and foundational to all other beliefs.



**Isaiah 46:9-10** “...I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’”

I could go into a lengthy dissertation about the meanings of the Hebrew words in this verse, but for our purposes here, let me simply paraphrase what God is saying in this verse.

*I am God. There is no other God like me. Because I am God, I knew how the world and all of creation would end before I ever began to create. Before there ever was a sun to rise in the East, I am able to shine light on everything that had not yet been created or produced. I am able to make visible all things even before they were capable of being seen.*

*There is purpose in everything that I do. That purpose is so established and fixed that it will endure throughout all of eternity. I will effectively accomplish everything in which I take pleasure and delight. There is none who can prevent me.*

What happens when a country or a people or the church is mistaken or willfully ignores the biblical concept of God in favor of one that is more popular among the people?

Hosea, the Old Testament prophet, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, quoted God in chapter 4 of his prophecy:

**Hosea 4:1** Hear the word of the LORD, you children of Israel, for the LORD brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: “There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land.”

There was no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land of Israel in the days of Hosea and the same thing might be said of our own land today.

We wish for our nation to be healed and to see an end of the turmoil and the conflict of social and political views that seem to have overtaken us and threaten to destroy everything our country has ever stood for.

But we need to be reminded that we will never, within ourselves, solve the issues that face our nation, because the problem is not a political or economic or a judicial problem, but a spiritual problem.

The solution requires the hand of God. However, as a nation, we have rejected God as the Creator and the fundamental ruler of the Universe and have even gone so far as to make it illegal to proclaim the name of Jesus in a public forum. Whatever can we expect down the road but certain destruction as a country unless there is a massive revival in the land?

When applied to the nation as a whole, the scope and size of the problem is easy to avoid. Our minds and hearts cannot grasp the solution to such an insurmountable problem. God knows this, just as He knew it with Israel. And, therefore, He brought the problem down to a size that was easier to comprehend.

***Hosea 4:6a My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (of God, see Hosea 4:1).***

God gets very personal in His judgment. The land inhabited by God's people, Israel, is also inhabited by multitudes of other people groups who either do not know the God of Israel or have rejected the God of Israel in favor of their own gods.

So in verse 6, God narrows the scope of judgment to His own people. Through the prophet Hosea, He makes it clear that the same thing that is true in the nation is also true among God's very own people.

God also makes it clear that the consequences of failing to maintain the truth concerning the character of God yields grave consequences. Hosea continues to record the voice of God in verse 6...

***Hosea 4:6b Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me...***

Later, in chapter 6, God makes clear the critical nature of a correct knowledge of God.

***Hosea 6:6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.***

God says to His people (and today, that includes the church), "I do not care about the kind of music you sing in Sunday morning worship. I don't care whether you have drums in the church. I don't care how many prayers are said, what lessons are taught, how many children you have in Vacation Bible School, the size of your offering, or the number of baptisms you brag about. What moves Me and satisfies my soul is your knowledge of Me."

Here is the problem.

All too often, our concept of God and of His purpose for creation, for establishing the plan of redemption, and for founding the church comes from what we have learned in Sunday School or heard taught from the Bible or from Granny. Most people, including church leadership and educational staff, cannot give a description of God and His purpose from a biblical point of view.

When we base our concept of God and His purposes on traditions or from our own imaginations instead of on what "thus saith the Lord," then the god we worship is not the biblical Jehovah, but a false god – an idol. God destroyed the nation of Israel and sent the nation of Judah into 70 years of captivity primarily because of that one sin – idolatry.

What then awaits such a church except certain destruction unless there is a massive revival in their midst? When the church loses its biblical definition of God, God warns us through Hosea

that He will reject that church as His effective instrument of evangelism. That is what God means when He says, “I also will reject you from being priest for Me.”

To make sure that we get the point, and to reinforce how foundational nature of the doctrines of God, God goes even one step further. Even when we talk about the church as opposed to the nation, the size of the problem is still larger than we can grasp. So God literally brings the problem home. Look again at the end of verse 6 of chapter 4 of Hosea.

**Hosea 4:6c** ...because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget **your children**.

When the church – God’s chosen people – reject or fail to worship the God of Scripture in favor of our own imagined or traditional concepts of God, God will not only reject that church, but He carries His judgment into the homes of the members of that church. He says, in the end of verse 6, that when you reject the truth of God as it is revealed in Scripture in favor of traditions and incorrect or incomplete doctrine, He ***also will forget your children***.

In other words, He will allow our children to lose sight of Him and to wander away into darkness and ignorance and destruction. Is this happening today?

Research from George Barna indicates that we are seeing this very thing happen.

Millennials are leaving the church. Nearly six in ten (59%) young people who grow up in Christian churches end up walking away, and the unchurched segment among Millennials has increased in the last decade from 44% to 52%, mirroring a larger cultural trend away from churchgoing in America. When asked what has helped their faith grow, “church” does not make even the top 10 factors. ([Source](#))

I tell you, there is no more dire warning in all of Scripture that this – that we are obligated to ourselves, to our children, and to the lost of this world to remember who it is that we serve – that church is not about us and our happiness, but about God and His holiness.

For when we ignore or become careless in our knowledge concerning the character of God, then we become like Israel, as Paul wrote about them in his letter to the church at Rome.

**Romans 10:2** ...I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.  
**3** For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

In plain language, when we lose sight of the fact that the focus of church is the worship and the honor and the glory of God, we begin to believe that church is all about us. And when the focus of church is on man, then things begin to go awry, and we begin to fret and to worry about how things ever got this bad.

Only when we have come to a clear understanding of the person and the power and the purpose of God will we begin to understand that our petty arguments, our selfish attitudes, and our trivial accusations against one another within the church carry absolutely no weight at all when measured against the awesome power of an Almighty God whose eternal purpose is going to be accomplished either through us or in spite of us.